7/13/67

Dear Shirley,

Your troubled letter about Colonel Castorr warrents immediate response.

There is no doubt, he is the Castorr of the FBI and CS reports. There is no doubt he is a "friend" of Walker's and Hunts, and the others of the radical right. There is no doubt he sincerely believes most of the nonsense of the radical right -not all of it, however, as for example his devotion of Vinegar Joe Stilwell, whose G-1 he was.

He is the Castorr of Mechem's statements to Kelley, of which we know Kelley's account. He is also, as I didn't know, the one accused of being in CUSA, which he says he wasn't. He is, however, a friend of Morris'.

He is not the colonel of Nancy Rich's story. What is meant by acting like an intelligence officer I am now satisfied I know. It is his effort, no doubt persistent, to determine if the Cuban refugees met his own personal and to us odd standards of "loyalty". Bringuier would have been a good one to him. The students, however, are not.

Soon you will have an idea of the information I have gotten from him. We already have proof of Cuban threats against Kennedy in Dallas and before the public announcement Kennedy was going there. I now know at least one Dallasite running guns to Cuba. What may evolve from what I have learned from them is unvelievable. Only time will tell. There is, for example, much on Butler. Now while there is very little on which we have political agreement, I do not for one moment think he has any connection with the assassination and I do ~~xxx~~ think he will in any way he can help solve it and bring out the truth. To me, that is the important thing. That we are friendly helps this, does not hurt it. We have, however, met only on business. His holiday stop here was to give me what I consider to be a possibly very valuable tip. It is now in Garrison's possession and just happens to be something he has been working on. If you want more, let me know. I hope this is enough to satisfy you. It is not a question of me making him pro-Kennedy or him converting me to a Walker fan. Neither can happen, neither of us will try.

My relationship with LIFE is with a single staff member and his assistant. He can do and is doing things I want to do and cannot. They are things you also want done and also cannot do. They can get and have gotten things that we cannot, and I have seen some. They will try and buy every picture at all related to the assassination that we can tell them about. They already have some. I can see any of them I want. They have let Ray and Dick Sprague see their pictures. I didn't have time. Dick is working with them, and I approve. I turned ~~xx~~ everything I had on picture leads over to Dick without having met him, without knowing anything about his politics and beliefs and without inquiring simple because I believe he wants the truth about the assassination and will work to get it. He can do what I cannot. To me this is sufficient reason. That in his little writings he has not seen fit to say that he is following my leads does not prevent my helping him in any way I can, including giving him public credit. At the same place you also saw what I had to say about LIFE and the Zap film. This man sees as we do. The owners of the magazine do not. There is a major conflict there. Perhaps by helping develop the information that can be developed, we can put him in a position to convince those above him of the truth, swing the balance. Perhaps he will fail. In his failure he will have collected evidence we cannot. They have already spent what for us is a fortune on this. I have trusted him with unpublished materials. He has respected that trust. His relations with the Castorrs (she is the more important) is through me and because of me. I arranged it. Our agreement is a simple one: there will be no public use of anyhthing we learned from them alone without their approval, a not unusual journalistic arrangements and a not dishonorable one. It is my idea and it is the means by which we may learn much that we cannot from any other

source or in any other way.

In strictest confidence, let me show you the LIFE attitude as mexpresse expressed by this man: They are willing to pay me a consultants fee enough to pay for the commerical typing of the 600 page manuscript of GIA WHITEWASH: ONE WAID IN NEW ORLEANS for offset reproduction. I hope I am not sorry I didn't do it; but I have made an arrangement instead with a small publisher.

We need allies, Shirley, not enemies. This does not mean we have to love them, sleep with them, agree with them. It merely means that we think we can trust them in their identity of interest. In both of these cases I believe this to be the case.

Lookk what all the others have done to us. Has LIFE? Will you not be satisfied for them to come out this fall withxa big spread of unseen pictures, even if they do not include their own Zapruder frames? I will be, and I've told them everything I can think of that will help them locate such pictures. They have now seen Willis' unseen frames and know enough to learn whether or not they have significance.

Even the Connally story: did it not do much good, for all its faults? I helped the SEPost on their autopsy piece. In fact, I salvaged them when they failed. They did not keep their agreement with me. But did the story not do some good?

Let us not teach the Pope holiness. Let us accept the help we can get. We need it, very much.

Someday we will meet and I'll tell you more. Until then, I hope this is enough to quiet your fears. I'd rather not put more in the mails. But to make it simple: is not the possession of a tape recording of the Cuban threat against JFK in Dallas in early October 1963 enough, all by itself, to justify any risk you see? That we now have, though we cannot use it now. We now havepictures of Hall-Howard-Seymour. We have frames of the Hughes films and others. I have a print of a single frame of the Zeigman film, of the man in the doorway. Many other things, too, beyond your capacity to get or mine. I think LIFE will not buy all the available assassination pictures. Those that Dick has seen he has already described to them. His picture chart is mounted on their wax wall. If I did not trust Billings, I would not be dealing with him or recommending that you see and cooperate with him. I acknowledge a predisposition to trust everyone (for I can live no other way) and many serious errors because of it. However, there have also been those worthy of trust, and these have done really valuable things.

I am not happy with the NBC and CBS things, nor with the AP's, which I think hurt more. You did not mention it. But on balance they do move us forward. They will seriously impede sale of my books. But they will also help bring out the truth, in the long run.

Please rest your fears. Castorr/castor-Caster did not kill the President, was not part of it, is opposed to its having been done despite his political disagreements with JFK. If we can confirm a small part of what we have learned through him, you will be happy. We already have enough to have made him valuable. If LIFE gets the pictures, even if they do not print them, they are no longer lost. They already have a hell of a lot.

Peace, dear Shirley